

And Yet the Black Sea Can Be an Essential Geostrategic Pivot in the Solution of Euro-Asiatic Endogenous Conflictuality

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ABSTRACT: One of the geopolitical and geostrategic synthesis key areas on the strategic axis Black Sea - Baltic Sea reluctance re-opened following the Ukrainian crisis is the more or less extensive Black Sea region. The historical, political, economic and civilian arguments, as well as the new challenges of the regional security environment, but also cross-border and global, leave the great powers on both sides of the strategic axis Black Sea - Baltic and riparian countries a chance that we consider not only an alternative to ... war, otherness, but also a way of transforming divergences into confluences and confluence in unity, prosperity and security. Even though the complicated and tense realities at this point seem not to encourage such a prospect, we believe that the Black Sea area can become – and indeed become – an East-West welding space, a true geopolitical and geostrategic, economic, social synapse and inter-civilization, which will put an end to the strategic flaw effect here in bitter weather. In the following, we will present this point of view.

KEYWORDS: Black Sea, confluence, connection, divergence, geopolitical and geostrategic pivot

Introduction

Although the progress of human society is immense, the essence of our world - its endogenous conflictuality - has not changed. Basically, it remains the same. We think of the end of the universe, but we hang every day between normality, abnormality, crisis and war. Moreover, it seems that war – the act of extreme sacrifice, but also of chivalry and heroism once committed with honor in the name of vital interest – has been subtly but tenaciously converted into perverse policies and perverse strategies in which the stratagem takes more and more the place of direct and wise strategies. At the same time, the war came out of its own limits - that of being a continuation of politics by violent means, as Clausewitz wrote -, becoming a hybrid, continuous, flexible geometry, and often with unpredictable, even chaotic developments. Practically, the war encompassed all of humanity with all its fields, from economic, political and military, to cognitive. Under these conditions, at least within a reasonable time, and beyond, it is hard to assume that mankind will ever be able to return to the springs and clear its becoming.

Dangers and threats are both solid and subtle, predictable and unpredictable, organized and chaotic, parable and impartial, rigid and flexible, visible and invisible, etc. These have expanded and developed enormously with the expansion of knowledge processes, high technology, nanotechnology, and IT globalization. Silent Western Europe, after the millennia of conflict and wars, colonial conquests and terrible internal tortures, freedom with forceps, and excuse with the great eyewitness in which it has survived and dramatically survived, is again troubled by, on the one hand, its internal conflicts, never fully solved by the lack of a common ideal of all Europeans, of unacceptable strategies and stratagems for the civilization identities of the states but placed on the wallpaper of Brussels and, on the other hand, of the massive migration of part of the world millions of Muslims in the metropolises that once ruled the world and which, after the Second World War, seemed to have gone to an elegant and aristocratic pension.

But from time to time, nothing is, and can no longer be, as before. Western policies and strategies towards the Middle East and especially the Near and North Africa – essentially destabilizing and shattering the identities there, in order to be more easily dominated, or simply to give them they prove to be not only bankrupt, but also extremely dangerous, even for those who have generated them, less for the United States, which, after the terrible September 11, has taken very serious measures for its own security. The direct and most terrible effects of these policies and strategies, to which, of course, the recrudescence of unprecedented virulence and aggression in the

Muslim world, namely, in Muslim extremism seem to have deeply and very seriously deepened the gap between this Muslim-Arabic and Western civilization, more precisely, the group of Western civilizations, but also the oriental civilization, especially the one that is largely identified with Russia. In other words, Muslim extremism is in a terrible asymmetric war, both with Western civilization and with Russia, but also with the “unbelievers” of its own city. This is how, in the present days, it has emerged under the Western eyes of the West, but also of the Muslims, the Islamic State – a terrorist warfare formation that does not want any more than to restore the caliphate to a huge scale and even to it extends beyond the borders of China and the Far East and even beyond the European and Asian continents.

This extremely serious geopolitical and geostrategic situation has never had such an extent in the history of the world. And even if the civilization of knowledge goes ahead and its progress is amazing, the world’s war against the world - which is not a mere metaphor, but a subtle and at the same time boorish reality – develops non-linearly and even chaotically, and this he feels most worrying here at the Pontus-Euxin, on our coast, in Romania and in the other riparian countries.

Is there any possible geopolitical and geostrategic harmony in the Black Sea?

One of the major themes we have approached over the years, both in the scientific debate on geopolitics of the Black Sea and in the pages of the magazine “Strategic Universe” (<http://iss.ucdc.ro/revista.html>), targeted and aimed at precisely studying the conditions and parameters of a possible connection of law and fact in the area of the secular strategic fault in the Black Sea region and on the Black Sea - Baltic Sea axis. Of course, not for the sake of civilization confluences and universal harmony, but rather for the generation of a new geopolitical paradigm, based on complex and durable connections, not on faults, on cooperation rather than on confrontation and on strategic and tactical forces, on the war (Bodansky 2010, 142-165).

At one point, there seemed to be extremely favorable conditions for such a thing, and the visions of that time could only be optimistic. In fact, after the implosion of communism and, in a way, the completion of a certain stage of the process of de-tensioning East-West relations, the ideological fault disappeared, even though there were many remaining repercussions, and the waiting horizon in political, societal, and inter-civilization, or, in any case, it had begun to be increasingly lacking in the storms of history.

In 1991, on the initiative of Turkey, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization was established, and in the years to come, the Eastern Partnership of the European Union (Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia) was created, the synergy of the Sea Black Sea, Black Sea Naval Force in 2001 (Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria, Georgia) and other structures designed to implement new European, Euro-Atlantic and Euro-Asian cooperation mechanisms and crisis and conflict management, drug trafficking routes, weapons, strategic material and living flesh, etc. in one of the most sensitive and enigmatic places on planet Earth.

Despite the crises that have occurred in the region (the wars in Yugoslavia, the tensions and conflicts in the Western Balkans, the crisis in Chechnya, the crisis in Transnistria and the Caucasus), the actual cooperation in the Black Sea region seemed to take place in - normally beneficial for both the countries in the area and the area of contact between the two continents of the three categories of civilization (Western, Orthodox and Muslim) to use the language of Samuel P. Huntington in his famous work *The clash of civilizations ...* for the European Union, for NATO, for Russia, and even for the Middle East and Middle East countries, located in the second and third circles of strategic interest of the area, viewed from the point of view of the Romanian space .

Of course, all these bloody and dramatic conflicts have and still have contributed to the degradation of the regional and international security environment, but the freezing of these conflicts and the de facto acceptance of their effects in anticipation of better solutions or that of the *Tempus edax rerum*, offered a chance (quite frail, but still a chance) to renormalize the situation in the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Republic of Moldova and to achieve good cooperation in the Black Sea. It was, of course, an illusion.

Through the wars in Yugoslavia, the conflicts in the Caucasus and Transnistria, Chechnya, and terrorist attacks in Turkey, the Caucasus, Moscow and some European capitals, the conflict in the Black Sea region has also been re-energized, beyond that, the geopolitical and geostrategic components were immediately activated.

In a certain way, the disturbing former foyer, that is to say the area that stretches between the Caspian Sea and the Far East, has come back into play, but not in the traditional sense of migrating the warrior populations to the West, but in the opening, the same formerly migratory corridors including the Silk Road route, clandestine shipping routes from Afghanistan, weapons from major East and other oil companies, and other materials of strategic importance. As a matter of fact, the area was conflicting, and the great arms producers found in this reality a market that they exploited and still exploits by all legal or illegal means (Degeratu, Tudose and Văduva, 2012; Popescu and Văduva 2016, 134-172).

Suddenly, the geopolitical, geostrategic, geo-economic and geo-invasive stake of the Black Sea region grew enormously and the chance of confluence and connection diminished a lot. And here's why:

a) The geopolitical and geostrategic component. The European Union, in its neighborhood and enlargement policies towards the East, has accepted a proposal for the establishment of the Eastern Partnership and has immediately gone to the facts. Russia perceives this European Union policy as an expansion in its immediate strategic security area, an area known to the Eastern Eurasian Empire, located outside the borders of Russia, in border countries, especially in Ukraine, Belarus, Baltic and Caucasian countries (to counter the threats in the West). Since that time, Russia has intensively accelerated its modernization programs, further to the strategic nuclear forces (endowment with the new-generation ballistic missiles Topol and Topol M etc.), the naval forces of the four fleets and, of course, of ground forces. Moscow's official positions show that Russia has perceived the Eastern Partnership as well as NATO and EU enlargement policies and strategies on behalf of some Caucasus countries, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, and the policy of placing and strengthening US military bases near its borders as a threat. In its security strategies, Russia has explicitly formulated this. The way NATO summit in Bucharest 2008 is taking place and the Russian military intervention in Georgia is the first response given by Russia to what the Kremlin understood to follow the West. And then, on the other side of the Black Sea the Baltic Sea, the first devices have already been formed in one form or another. For starters, only in the project. The geopolitical dimension has thus generated the first geostrategic sketches, for the time being well-camouflaged by the Russia-EU Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, the NATO-Russia Council, the Partnership for Peace and other forms of Eastern Partnership and Cooperation -West. The location of the US missile shield at Deveselu, the activation of the Kogălniceanu military base at the disposal of the Americans, the other facilities made by Romania in the framework of the Romanian-American strategic partnership, plus the ones made by Poland, the Czech Republic and the Baltic States were perceived by Russia, as the Kremlin has officially declared on a number of occasions as a threat to Russia. Of course, between the position of Russia, on the one hand, and that of the European Union and NATO, on the other hand, a kind of rupture was created, and what followed - and in the very collaborative and partnership meetings Russia- EU, and within the NATO-Russia Council - has become a kind of deaf dialogue.

However, the summit in Vilnius of the Eastern Partnership was the culmination of the tightening of the West-Russia relations. Georgia, Armenia and the Republic of Moldova signed the agreement there, and Ukraine postponed this decision. As a result, in *Maidan*, the *Maidan* phenomenon, supported, at least tacitly, by the West, and staring with Eastern concern, that is, Russia. The reaction of Russia was terrible. It followed the annexation of the Crimea, through a referendum, following the model of Kosovo, then the outbreak of the war in the East of Ukraine. A terrible, hybrid format, but, in essence, extremely virulent, which blew again the land of Don and, implicitly, the European one. Kiev is only 700 km away from Moscow, and Russia interpreted the attitude of the new Kiev and Western leadership as a gathering of the Western, especially American, circle around its territory as a new Anaconda strategy, according to policies and Cold

War Washington embankment strategies. Since that time, the Black Sea - Baltic Sea strategic flagship has been reopened, and Russia has stepped up its preparations for a possible war. But the war had already begun, through its political, economic, hybrid and, above all, cybernetic forms. The geopolitical stake is huge, as the vital interests facing the area are centuries old and their sheep formulas cause earthquakes in the minds of any man on Earth. The largest nuclear powers of the Planet are again on one side and the other of a steel and oil curtain.

During this time, by surprise, Russia was a strategic expeditionary force and intervened in the strategic corridor of Caspian, Iran, Iraq, Syria, a corridor adjacent to the Mediterranean, strongly striking opponents of Bashar al-Assad and the Islamic State. This strategic offensive attitude of Russia, a great power that, since the strategic maritime maneuver of 1905, through which the Russian flora in the Baltic has bypassed half of the earth globe and entered into the ambush of Admiral Togo at Tushima, has never come out of its space direct strategic security, seemed incomprehensible. But the warning has already been given. All the nuclear ogres on the planet have reintroduced their targets. And the cure of strategic arms with high tech and robotics has been redeployed. The vast majority of countries on Earth, except Romania, are arming. When the spark occurs, the civilization of the hominids will jump in the air.

b) The geo-economic component. Russia owns more than 60 percent of the planet's energy and water resources but has a population of only 142 million. Western Europe is still dependent on the natural gas resources in Russia and is transported by Russian pipelines to the European Union, and the issue of getting out of this unilateralism favoring the Eurasian power in the East (Russia uses the energy transport network and its resources on a real geo-energy weapon) is still difficult. In order to stop Russia from its geostrategic impetus, the United States and the European Union have launched a series of economic sanctions, during which Russia has strengthened its ties with China and India within the BRICS, as well as its partnership with China within the framework of the Cooperation Organization from Shanghai. Several years ago, with German aid, Russia completed the North Stream trans-Baltic pipeline program, which is transporting Russian energy resources to Germany and the countries on the route, significantly reducing the value of gas pipelines passing through Ukraine. The South Stream pipeline program on the Black Sea strategic corridor, although postponed by the Ukrainian war and the increasing tensions in the Black Sea, has not been completely abandoned. After the Russian air force Suhoi-24 was shot down in summer by the Turkish Air Force, for raping Russia's territory for a few seconds, Russia threatened to interrupt the construction of the energy transport pipeline would be in Turkey. But eventually, Moscow and Ankara - the two great poles in the Black Sea, the enemies of the past centuries, and the main actors of the geopolitical and geostrategic space of the Black Sea - have again given their hand. But it does not follow that the battle for the huge Russian resources as well as for the Arctic Ocean has come to an end, but it has just begun. Resources are, in fact, the great political, geopolitical and geostrategic space of the Black Sea. The Black Sea, the Caspian Sea, Central Asia, Siberia and the Far East are part of the Planet's Great Geo-energetic Corridor, and the main battle will probably be here in the Black Sea. And if things are so - and it is quite clear that this is the case - then can it be possible to reconcile these major strategic corridors into a Eurasian pivot of the Black Sea? Who and why could they have such an interest, when the current tendencies are to divide, shake and shake the parts so that they can never constitute a whole? (Frunzeti, Mureșan and Văduva, 2009).

c) The geo-civilization component. Here things are even more complicated. The only standing and earthly civilization identity of the Black Sea space, as far as we know until this hour (in the sense that it has not come from nowhere, but it is from here on the earth), is the Romanian one. It differs from all others and cannot be framed in Slavic civilization, Muslim, or temporal, but only in the customs of the earth. Well, the Black Sea region shelters both the peoples who have lived here for thousands of years, and those who have come over them, merged with them or just cohabited, fought, etc. and so on. It can be said that in the Black Sea area, every present country represents a civilization identity that comes from the ancient world and has its values, customs, culture and life. It is right, in *Descriptio Moldaviae*, Cantemir wrote that there is no other region in Europe in which there is so much diversity and so many tribes together. This phrase says a lot. The peoples living in

this part of the world are living together, but they do not identify each other. On the contrary, the trend is to separate even more. And all the attempts that have been made so far to merge them, to make them one with the earth, have failed. Today, with the massive migration of Muslims to Europe, especially in Western Europe, it turns out again, if necessary, that Muslims are Muslims and Christian Christians, that Bulgarians are Bulgarians and Romanians, that Turks are Russians and Russians are Russians, etc.

Here, in this cultural space blessed by God and worn by men, cultural, linguistic, religious identities do not merge but continue at any cost to remain themselves. Moreover, at one point, it was rumored that one of Putin's geo-cultural goals would be to recreate the Constantinople of Christian civilization. We do not know whether Putin had ever thought and said it or not – the civilization boundaries once hard to be able to change – but the idea of a stable, perennial cultural identity despite the artificial and opportunistic multiculturalism that is being circulated today The European Union continues to recover. Of course, it is hoped that the new age of cogno-civilization could blur the differences and prevent cultural conflict, centered on information in real time, on the network and on cognition. But this does not necessarily mean that historical cultural identities will fade or disappear, but only that they will have a vast cultural-cognitive heritage (of common cognitive values) and some ancestral parameters of cultural identification on the water of the water upwards springs. Well, in the wider Black Sea region, despite the existence of great dictatorial and leveling empires for centuries, even millennia, specific cultures could not be either blurred or destroyed. But from here, the apodictic and even categorical conclusion that the parties can never form and integrate into a unitary, coherent and coherent one can not necessarily be removed. Then, how can we talk about a possible Euro-Asian geo-cultural and geo-civilization pivot?

The paradigm of essential geopolitical and geostrategic connections

The peoples and civilizations on the first circle of construct and strategic interest have lived here for centuries. They endured all the twists and turns of the times, barricaded themselves in the cities, fled to the mountains, at times of distress, entered the tunnels when daunting times came, fought with the invaders, but mostly formed and have preserved their value systems that have consolidated the foundation of their existence under the sun. These things cannot be changed as long as you hit your hands. And no one will accept to be changed because no one changes their lives and habits for the sake of change. And, anyway, these changes, if they take place, come from stringent needs and last for centuries. It takes time, for a long time. Whenever history, the sovereignty, independence, identity, and personality of these peoples have been attacked, so many times the lands have bled. People have lived, and many of them have died here, fighting for their freedom, security, prosperity and individuality and their countries. And even when the Black Sea area was under the rule of great empires, the civilization identities here kept their beliefs, symbols, phonemes, morphemes, semantics, that is, language, values, culture and civilization.

Therefore, a possible geopolitical, geostrategic, geo-economic and geo-civilization connection in this area, as anywhere in the world, cannot be achieved outside the preservation of these ancestral values and these civilization identities. And, after all, why would such connections be necessary? Are not they, if they will, reproducing, in new forms, more or less subtle, the empires of the past? Will the countries in the area accept such a perspective, since, since they were on Earth, they have fought for identity, freedom, security and prosperity? Did not the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Ottoman Empire and the Tsarist Empire disappear on behalf of these identities? Not in the name of such an identity has the state of the South Slavs, in the last decade of the last century, collapsed, bloody and dramatically?

And questions about this can continue, because there are so many. All the connections to date from the modern age have not been achieved by destroying identities, but, on the contrary, by accentuating them. That is why globalization processes will not be able to pass over their identity, personality and the sovereignty of the states of law, with their leveled balancing, as the philosophy of crowd crowding civilization over human axiology cannot go beyond the individual value of man.

Man will always remain the human core of the Universe, as a country, no matter in what form and political regime it exists, will remain the civilization home of the people of planet Earth.

In conflict and fault areas, it is necessary to establish connection pairs on the basis of common ideals and common realities that enhance the strength, stability, security, freedom and prosperity of the area. Therefore, despite all the elements and realities that led to the reopening of the strategic Black Sea – Baltic Sea flagship and the stirring of the Black Sea spirits, we consider that the essential paradigm of the future of this region is the geopolitical and geostrategic connection, in this area, on the support political, economic, cultural and civilization, of all riparian and second-tier states, enhancing the capabilities and capabilities of the countries in the region, and blurring the endogenous and exogenous conflict that has existed for millennia here in favor of unity and completeness (Văduva, 2013). But unity and integration cannot be done by diminishing the value of the parties, that is to say the states of law, but by harmonizing their interests, on the basis of common values and those assembled in new and consistent systems of values. In this sense, the Black Sea has the value of a true strategic synapse in the sense that, in an area with so many problems, it ensures the interconnection of strong flows with economic, social, geopolitical and geostrategic effects, as well as the possibility of beneficial connections, especially economic and security, whereas:

- is part of the planet's essential energy corridor, made up of the space resources of Siberia and the Far East, Central Asia and the Caspian Sea, connected with the Middle East and the Persian Gulf;

- the Black Sea area itself is an area rich in energy resources that is very important for the countries of the region but also for the countries of the European Union;

- is part of the southern maritime strategic corridor (the Black Sea, the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, the Marmara Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, ensuring the countries of this country exit to the warm ocean;

- is located in the opening area of the Danube's strategic corridor, connecting the Black Sea, through the Danube-Rhine-Rhine Navigation systems with the northern seas;

- substantially alleviates the effect of the fallacy on the Black Sea – Baltic Sea axis and can contribute to the de facto construction of the Euro-Asian unit, which is very important both for the access of countries on the great Eurasian geographic platform to the planet's resources and for the creation of a huge area stability, integrity and security in the most sensitive region of the Earth;

- may contribute to the redistribution of large lines of inter-civilizing force to ensure that two-thirds of the world's population behave better in the era of cognitive civilization and globalization.

Of course, such a pivot of the main Euro-Asian power lines (the Russian line, the Western European line, the Balkan line, the Middle East line, the Near East line and the North African line) could not only produce connections but also open new fronts in the battles for planetary power, especially for finances and resources, which is quite serious. But if this is not the case, we could further assist in accentuating the strategic flagship of the Black Sea – the Baltic Sea, to concentrate the forces of the East (Russia) and the West (US and NATO) on both sides of this and the emergence of apocalyptic scenarios, on the one hand, of the destruction by war of Russia in order to seize its energy resources, or, on the other hand, of preventive and preemptive action of Russia, a total spectrum, with all the military means at its disposal, including those of its huge nuclear force, either only partially and stratagemically, but with the same disastrous effects. Already circulate such visions and scenarios through different environments.

Beyond the scenarios, there are realities that, at any time, can degenerate into terrible confrontations on this huge Eurasian geographic platform. It is true that all the great powers of the world, and especially Russia, the United States, China and India, are arming. The political and strategic objective of this arming is not only in mutual discouragement, but also in a thorough and very concrete preparation for the last war of the planet or only for preemptive (but categorical and virulent) actions that can balance power to one of these great powers, or a support group for one or another of the powers with global strategic dominance. It is becoming increasingly clear that the world of power is moving towards such a horizon, not a peaceful and disarmed one.

The connection to the geopolitical and geostrategic area of the Black Sea could balance the world's power towards Eurasia, or in any case, it would improve current tensions and develop coherent policies and strategies to pull the area out of tension and provide riparian and all countries from here and across the platform a chance for security, freedom and sustainable development (Frunzeti 2010, 166-192).

Through the policies and strategies of cooperation and cooperation in the Black Sea, through the initiatives and attitudes of the countries here, important steps have been taken to justify such an inter-continental Euro-Asian and Inter-Civilization connection, but the events in Ukraine, the war in Syria, the turmoil in Turkey, the internal problems faced by all the countries here and many others have delayed the possibility of such a project for a while. But time is not over. For example, the construction of the planned Black Sea highways (around the Black Sea), the opening of the old Silk Road on new bases, the development of energy transport projects, the fight against separatist and conflictual excesses, the resolution of some outstanding issues left unresolved here for centuries, etc. and, above all, concentrating the constructive effort on the need to achieve a common geopolitical and geostrategic, geo-economic and geo-linking support, as well as the involvement of the European Union, NATO and all strategic partnerships in such a project, could correct on time which has never been corrected and not even considered significantly.

Conclusions

1. In the area where, perhaps more than nine millennia ago, probably Noah's flood occurred, and the planetary ocean through the Mediterranean passed through the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles and flooded over that remnant of the Tetis Sea, called the Black Sea today, is the time to re-occur a very large event that brings to the same mass with three geopolitical, geostrategic and inter-civilizing masses, the East and the West, the North and the South, the great powers and the great economic, cultural ideas and civilization. The small mass of the Black Sea can provide the framework and the case of a historical reconciliation, a geopolitical and geostrategic construction by which we can access together the new dimension of the civilization of knowledge and survival on the planet Earth.

2. The Black Sea, the place where so many events have happened over the millennia, even in the current conditions when NATO and Russia are on both sides of a line of fault, for mutual supervision, deterrence and even confrontation, when Syria is for over four years in a devastating war, when the great powers breathe the bullet through the pipe, can play a vital role in the parties' connection without destroying their history, life and, above all, identity and security. The Black Sea is like a synapse between Euro-Asian neurons, which can optimize the flow of communication and strategic wisdom so that we here change the rule and paradigm, from confrontation, to connection, from divergence to convergence. It is, of course, very difficult, as here, over time, divergences have prevailed over convergence, but we have remained together. And this is essential.

3. The Black Sea is the place where such geopolitical, geostrategic, geo-economic, geo-cultural and inter-civilization pivot can be generated. Turkey, Russia, Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria and Georgia, countries in the first circle of the area, from the first geopolitical and geostrategic scale, have already taken important steps in this direction. The Black Sea Synergy depends to a large extent on the will of these countries, on how they build trust and sustainability. The connection of the parties and the realization of the geostrategic pivot of the Black Sea is first of all the competence and duty of the countries here.

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